DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 408 011 PS 024 577

AUTHOR Ellis, Helen Jo; And Others
TITLE Positive Classroom Management.
PUB DATE May 96
NOTE 102p.; Master's Action Research Project, Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; *Behavior Change; *Behavior Problems; Change Strategies; *Classroom Techniques; Conflict Resolution; Cooperative Learning; *Discipline; Elementary Education; Grade 3; Grade 8; Interpersonal Competence; Middle Schools; *Student Behavior

ABSTRACT

This action research project involved implementation of a program designed to minimize inappropriate student behavior that interfered with instruction. The target populations were students in three third grades in an elementary school, one third grade in an intermediate school, and one eighth grade social studies class in a middle school. All schools were located in the northern suburbs of Chicago. The problem of student misbehavior was documented with behavior checklists, student surveys, administrator interviews, and teacher observations. Probable causes included changing family structures and negative media influence. Teachers also felt that a lack of comprehensive training in effective discipline techniques contributed to difficulties in establishing a well-ordered classroom. A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others and an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the development of a positive discipline program, an increased instructional emphasis on social skills in a cooperative learning setting, and the integration of these skills into content areas. Post-intervention data indicated that positive classroom management techniques, coupled with cooperative learning and social skills reinforcement, decreased classroom misbehavior and thus allowed more time for classroom instruction. (Appendixes present data collection instruments and sample lessons. Contains 31 references.) (Author/EV)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

PS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 408 011

POSITIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

by

*Helen Jo Ellis
***Ellen Finnegan
*Carol Ann Hastings
**Kevin Onsrud
*Beth Ann Rohrer

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for the degree of Masters of Arts in
Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Helen Jo Ellis
Ellen Finnegan
Carol Ann Hastings
Kevin Onsrud
Beth Ann Rohrer
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Action Research Project
Site: Lincolnshire, Illinois
Submitted: May, 1996

*Winkleman School
Glenview, Illinois
**Deerpath Middle School
Lake Forest, Illinois
***Woodland Intermediate
Gages Lake, Illinois

PS 024577

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SIGNATURE PAGE

This project was approved by

Charlotte Iwanicki-Floyd Ed. D.

Advisor

Mark Hatton MA MAT

Advisor

Tony Stiling Ph.D.

Dean, School of Education

Abstract

Authors: Helen Jo Ellis
Ellen Finnegan
Carol Ann Hastings
Kevin Onsrud
Beth Rohrer

Lincolnshire

Date: May, 1996

Title: Positive Classroom Management

This report described a program for minimizing inappropriate behavior that interfered with instruction. The targeted population consisted of three third grades in an elementary school, one third grade in an intermediate school and one eighth grade social studies class in a middle school. All schools were located in the northern suburbs of Chicago. The problems of student misbehavior were documented with behavior checklists, student surveys, administrative interviews, and teacher observations.

Analysis of probable cause indicated that changing family structures, negative media influence, and an increasingly self-centered society were negatively impacting student behavior. In addition, teachers felt that a lack of comprehensive training in effective discipline techniques contributed to difficulties establishing a well ordered classroom.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others and an analysis of the problem setting resulted in the development of a positive discipline program, an increased instructional emphasis of social skills in a cooperative learning setting and the integration of these skills in the content areas.

Post intervention data indicated that positive classroom management techniques coupled with cooperative learning and social skill reinforcement decreased classroom misbehavior thus allowing time for more classroom instruction.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Abstract		i
Chapter		
1	Problem Statement and Context	1
	General Statement of the Problem	1
	Immediate Problem Context	1
	The Surrounding Community	7
	Regional and National Contexts of Problem	10
2	Problem Evidence and Probable Causes	12
	Problem Evidence	12
	Probable Causes	23
3	The Solution Strategy	28
	Review of the Literature	28
	Terminal Objective	42
	Action Plan	43
4	Historical Description of Intervention	47
	Presentation and Analysis of Results	53
	Conclusions and Recommendations	66
	References Cited	69

Appendices.....

Appendix A - Pre-Intervention Elementary Survey..... 72

Appendix B - Pre-Intervention Middle School Survey..... 74

Appendix C - Teacher Survey..... 75

Appendix D - Administrative Questionnaire... 77

Appendix E - Classroom Rules..... 78

Appendix F - Homework..... 79

Appendix G - Quiz..... 81

Appendix H - Behavioral Checklist..... 83

Appendix I - Cooperative Lessons..... 84

Appendix J - Post Intervention Elementary Survey..... 92

Appendix K - Post Intervention Middle School Survey..... 94

Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

The students of the targeted third- and eighth-grade classes exhibit inappropriate behavior that interferes with classroom instruction. Evidence for the existence of the problem includes behavior referrals, teacher observations and anecdotal records.

Immediate Problem Context

School A, an elementary school, School B, a middle school, and School C, an intermediate school, are involved in the following research, and all statistics are from the 1993-94 state report card.

School A, the elementary school, is comprised of kindergarten through fifth grade, with a per pupil expenditure of $9,070. The enrollment is 561 students from a district that is 72 percent white, 22 percent Asian, four percent Hispanic,

and two percent black. Less than three percent of the students in the district, which has a mobility rate of 18 percent, are classified as low income. Twelve percent of the student population has limited English proficiency, and the majority of these students are native Korean-speaking children. The attendance rate is high at 96 percent, and no chronic truancy exists.

The third-grade average class size is 21 students. The school is staffed by 25 classroom teachers; two special education teachers; two English-as-a-Second-Language teachers; and teachers for music, physical education, art, speech and language, gifted, social work, and the learning center. A principal, assistant principal/language arts coordinator, science coordinator, and a psychologist constitute the school administration. The average teaching experience of the faculty is 13 years, and 65 percent of the teachers have their master's degree or higher. Teachers serve on various district and individual school committees, including a new committee formed this year to deal with the increasing number of discipline problems. The average salary of teachers is $45,137 and that of administrators is $78,369.

The elementary school offers a standard academic program supplemented by daily physical education classes,

twice-weekly music instruction, and weekly art, computer, and learning-center classes--all staffed by specialized teachers. Classrooms are self contained, and classes are grouped homogeneously by age and heterogeneously grouped by ability. During the 1995-1996 school year five modular classrooms were added to the 14-year-old facility to accommodate increasing enrollment.

The middle school in this study enrolls 635 sixth- through eighth-grade students. Classes are heterogeneously grouped by ability and are similar in age. In the district, 92 percent of the students are Caucasian, six percent Asian one percent Black, and one percent Hispanic. Less than one percent are classified as low income, and an identical percent have limited English proficiency. The average class size is 20 students.

The school contains a total of 50 teachers. Their average teaching experience is 11 years, and 51 percent of the staff have a master's degree or higher. The average teacher salary is $40,245, while that of an administrator is $72,217. The per pupil expenditure is $7,820. In 1987 and again in 1991, the school earned two National Excellence in Education awards.

This middle school is currently in the midst of a transformation from a junior high to a middle school concept. As a result, much of the curriculum is under review and is being rewritten or has already been rewritten, and is currently in the implementation stage. The standard eighth-grade academic program now includes English, social studies, math, and science, and a foreign language that can be French, Spanish, or Latin. All of the regular academic classes are taught in 44-minute blocks of time with the exception of English, which is taught as a double period consisting of two 44-minute blocks of time. The double period accommodates both grammar and literature.

In addition to the regular core subjects, students attend a variety of related arts classes. These classes include art, music, drama, home arts, computer, and industrial-art offerings. Students may select any of the classes offered for a nine-week period. At the conclusion of the nine-week block of time, students move on to another related arts course.

Due to increasing enrollment, the 27-year-old facility is slated for expansion. The media center and computer labs are no longer large enough to accommodate the needs of the students and staff. Classroom space has also become a

concern. Many teachers are asked to share rooms; others move from one room to another for various classes, while still others work in rooms formerly designed for either lounge areas or, in some cases, storage space.The intermediate school contains grades three through five and is located in a far northern county in Illinois. In the 1994-95 school year, there were 1,260 students. Ethnic characteristics of the student population are: 85 percent Caucasian, six percent Hispanic, six percent Asian/Pacific Islander and four percent African American. Low income students constitute four percent of the population, which is slightly above the district percentage and far below the state level. The intermediate school consists of two percent limited English proficient students, which is slightly below the district percentage of three percent and that of the state, which is five percent. The median household income for families of students in the intermediate school is $49,000.

The attendance rate for the intermediate school is 96 percent and the student mobility rate is 14 percent.

The intermediate school has 105 staff members; 98 percent are Caucasian, one percent are Hispanic and one percent are Asian/Pacific Islander. Eighty-five percent of the staff is female. The average experience level of the teachers is 11

years, and 34 percent of the teachers have a master's degree or above. The intermediate school is part of a consolidated district consisting of two primary buildings (Kindergarten through second grades), one intermediate building (third through fifth grades), and one middle school (sixth through eighth grades). The school serves many diverse communities that are part of a township. The intermediate school services an area encompassing 26 square miles and is experiencing severe growth problems resulting in increased class size.

The daily schedule consists of 60 minutes devoted to teaching mathematics, 25 minutes to science and social studies respectively, and 150 minutes to English (including all language arts classes). The curriculum is complemented with physical education three times per week, music twice per week, and visits to the learning center once a week. The previous mentioned programs are all taught by special teachers. Because there is no formal art program, classroom teachers integrate lessons into the curriculum whenever appropriate.

According to the Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP), the intermediate school has identified two areas for planned improvement. Present curricular offerings of the gifted program, its instructional delivery model, and the

student identification process are being reviewed. In addition the intermediate school has appointed a science committee whose members will work toward the integration of science, math, and technology as well as emphasizing the relevance of these subjects to society.

The Surrounding Community

The targeted elementary school also consists of children from two neighboring towns, but only the community in which the school is physically located is the subject of this section. The home community is a middle to upper-middle-class suburban area with a population of 37,093; 91 percent of the community is Caucasian and seven percent Asian. It is residential, with no heavy industry and some light industry, and is the home to a few corporate headquarters. Many residents commute to work by a train system that goes through the center of town. The neighboring communities have similar demographics.

The district is comprised of one elementary and one middle school. It is administered by a superintendent, a director of curriculum, and a business manager. The school is administered by a principal, a vice principal. A psychologist, a social worker and a counselor are also on staff full-

time. The district, once a homogeneous middle class area, has experienced a population and economic shift in recent years. This has resulted in increased numbers at both ends of the economic scale. About one-third of the students come from surrounding apartment complexes.

The median age of the population for the primary community is 37.5 years, and the median family income is $67,412.00. Forty-five percent of the community is employed in managerial and professional specialties; 37 percent are in other white collar careers. More than 50 percent of the adults have an associate/bachelor degree or above and less than eight percent of the adults do not have a high-school diploma. Less than two percent of the population is below the poverty level. The median home value is $233,400.00.

The surrounding community of the intermediate school consists of 32,680 people, 90 percent whom are of Caucasian descent. Other races represented in descending frequency are: Hispanic, Asian, African American, and Native American. According to the 1990 census, the median household income for the surrounding area of the intermediate school is approximately $45,000. The educational attainment of the surrounding community is such that 26 percent are high-school gradu-

ates, 24 percent have some college experience, and 21 percent have earned their bachelor's degree.

The intermediate school is governed by a school board consisting of seven members in addition to one superintendent, one principal, and two assistant principals. The district is currently involved in the support of a referendum to finance the construction of a new middle school.

The targeted middle-school is located in an affluent suburban area with a population of 17,836. The district has a total of 148 teachers in four primary schools (kindergarten through third grade), one intermediate school (grades four and five), and one middle school (grades six through eight). The district is administered by a superintendent, an assistant superintendent/curriculum coordinator, a business manager and a director of pupil personnel/support staff.

The district's population continues to grow and remains affluent. The median age of residents is 38 years, and the median household income is $94,824.00. The majority of the community are employed in managerial and professional specialties and other white collar careers. The community has no land currently zoned for industrial use. More than 65 percent of the adults have a bachelor's degree or above, and less than five percent do not have a high-school diploma.

Less than two percent of the population falls below the poverty level, while the median home value is $493,700.

Regional and National Context of Problem

According to Bennett and Rolheiser-Bennett (1992):

> Classroom management has perplexed educators since the invention of classrooms. So, the timeless creativity of students to irritate teachers is not new, but when woven together with today's increasing complexity and demands of teaching, the challenge has not become easier. Effective teachers realize that regardless of how well they teach, or how much students respect and like them, students will still misbehave (pp.108-109).

Increasingly, teachers and administrators are finding that the time and energy required to control misbehavior are causing a drain on the core mission of the school: to teach and to learn (Thomson, 1990). In a recent article in American Educator, Albert Shanker, president of The American Federation of Teachers, calls for the educators to give the problem of disruptive behavior top priority--even before addressing content and performance standards.

He points out that:

> ... nobody has ever learned in a classroom where one or two kids take up 90 percent of the time through disruption, violence, or threats of violence. You deprive children of an opportunity to learn if you do not first provide an orderly environment in the classroom and in the school (p. 10).

Since 1970, nearly every Gallup Poll has reported discipline as the public's number one educational concern. In addition, various teacher polls cite discipline as the number one cause of job related stress and discontent (Jones & Jones, 1986).

As the public has become more concerned with the problem of disruptive behavior, politicians have begun to take action. In 1994, the Louisiana legislature adopted a number of tough new discipline laws, joining other states including Texas, Ohio, and Mississippi in addressing this high profile problem ("Louisiana gets tough," 1994-1995).

In order to meet the challenges of educating our students for the 21st century, educators will need to concentrate on improving student discipline in our schools.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Evidence

"Approximately one-half of all classroom time is taken up with activities other than instruction, and discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of lost instructional time" (Cotton, 1990, p.1). According to Fredric Jones (1987), polls indicate that discipline is the top concern of parents and teachers. Evidence from all three sites studied supports this assertion.

To document the extent of the problem, all three sites--schools A, B, and C-- used anecdotal records, administrator interviews, and teacher and student surveys.

At site A, the behavior of the entering third grade class had been identified as a particular problem during their second grade year. During the summer of 1995, the third grade teachers and the school social worker received a grant to develop a program to address the problem of inappropriate

classroom behavior. This project was prompted in the spring of 1995 by a group of concerned parents who met with the administration, voicing their concern about classroom misbehavior and how it was taking away from their children's instructional time.

The teachers at every grade level in this school were concerned about an increase in inappropriate behavior at lunch, in the classroom and during recess. A discipline committee was formed to develop school-wide guidelines and to identify consistent rules and consequences.

At site B, the seventh grade class (this year's targeted eighth grade group) was identified in the 1994-1995 school year as having an unusually high number of students with social problems. The seventh grade teachers addressed the problem of student misbehavior by implementing a weekly program to teach social skills and study skills to improve social interactions and academic success.

Administrators at site C determined in the spring of 1995 that increased discipline referrals and growing enrollment were cause to implement a conflict resolution program in the 1995-1996 school year. A full-time coordinator was hired, and 18 fourth and fifth grade student volunteers were trained as conflict resolution mediators.

The method used to collect evidence of student misbehavior was consistent at each site. Students at the elementary level, sites A and C, were given a survey with 12 questions relating to classroom behavior (Appendix A). School B, the middle school, was given a survey with eight questions (Appendix B). Teachers at each site were also given a survey with similar questions (Appendix C). Students and teachers were asked to assess how frequently certain behaviors occurred in their classrooms in the previous year. Responses were limited to: never, not very often, sometimes, or many times. For purposes of this study, a behavior was considered to be "viewed as a problem" if it was said to occur sometimes or many times.

Ranked Listing of Student Behaviors

Viewed as a Problem

SITE A

Behavior	Rank	% of Teachers	Rank	% of Students
Talking out	1	97	1	78
Not following directions	2	89	3	44
"Goofing around"	3	79	2	49
Getting out of seats	4	72	6	31
Arguing in class	5	55	5	35
Fighting in class	6	34	8	24
Talking back to teacher	7	31	9	17
Taking things from others	8	24	4	38
Using bad language	9	17	7	30

Table 1

At site A, the survey was given to 63 third graders and 29 teachers during the first two weeks of school in the 1995-96 school year. Both students and teachers agreed that the most prevalent problem was students talking out without raising their hands, with the teachers nearly unanimous in citing this problem. Most teachers at site A also identified: not following directions, "goofing around," and getting out of seats as frequent problems (cited by 72-89 percent of the faculty respondents). On the other hand, less than half the surveyed students indicated that they were aware that these behaviors occurred frequently. It seems that these behaviors are more noticeable or disruptive to teachers than students. On the other hand, students ranked "taking things" as the fourth-most pervasive problem, while teachers ranked it second from last. Since "taking things" impacts students more directly than teachers, it is not surprising that students are more aware of this behavior being a problem.

Ranked Listing of Student Behavior

Viewed as a Problem

SITE B

Behavior	Rank	% of Teachers	Rank	% of Students
Off task behavior	1	93	1	81
Talking out of turn	2	87	2	77
Disrespect toward students	3	67	3	72
Distractive behavior	4	60	4	67
Arguing in classroom	5	13	6	20
Disrespect towards teacher	6	7	5	24
Inappropriate language	7	0	7	19
Fighting in classroom	8	0	8	5

Table 2

At site B a similar survey was given to 21 eighth graders and 15 teachers during the first week of the 1995-1996 school year. At the junior high, students and teachers agreed that off-task behavior, talking out of turn, students showing disrespect towards other students and distractive behavior made up the majority of classroom misbehaviors in the 1994-95 school year. Students and teachers did not agree on the frequency of the remaining four behaviors. Teachers and students agreed that arguments in the classroom, disrespect toward teachers, inappropriate language, and fighting in the classroom were not considered causes for the majority of classroom disruptions.

Ranked Listing of Student Behaviors

Viewed as a Problem

SITE C

Behavior	Rank	% of Teachers	Rank	% of Students
Talking out	1	100	1	72
Not following directions	2	100	3	60
Getting out of seats	3	88	6	36
"Goofing around"	4	83	2	72
Arguing in class	5	41	4	56
Talking back to teacher	6	17	8	24
Taking things from others	7	17	5	48
Using bad language	8	8	7	28
Fighting in class	9	8	9	16

Table 3

In the 1995-1996 school year, twelve teachers and 25 students were surveyed on separate occasions to determine the most bothersome problems in the classroom at site C during the prior year.

All teachers felt that students talking without raising their hands and students not following directions were the most inappropriate behaviors in the classroom. Seventy-two percent of students agreed with teachers that talking out without raising hands was the major disruptive behavior. However, the same percentage of students (72 percent) felt that "goofing around during class" was an equally frequent problem.

Eighty-eight percent of teachers considered students being out of their seats without permission as a problem, while only 36 percent of students thought so. Behaviors that seemed more disruptive to students than to teachers were: arguing, talking back to teachers, taking things, using bad language and fighting.

Students arguing in class was the fifth highest inappropriate behavior rated by teachers while students felt that arguing in class was the fourth highest behavior.

At sites A and B, the principals were interviewed and at site C, the assistant principal was interviewed concerning his or her perceptions of discipline problems at their school (Appendix B).

The principal of site A was interviewed the third week of school. The administrator felt the most prevalent discipline problems were disrespect for adult authority and a lack of appropriate school manners. It was noted that the school-at-large had not developed consistent strategies or consequences to deal with inappropriate school behavior. As an example of disrespectful behavior toward adults, the administrator cited a recent outburst of a second grader to a lunchroom aide, who was attempting to correct a misbehavior: "I don't have to listen to you! My dad can get you fired!"

The negative behavior this administrator most desired to change is student attitude. This administrator asserts that specific misbehaviors are more easily changed than the subtlety of attitude, which is expressed in body language and tone of voice.

When asked to compare this year's third grade class to previous groups, this administrator felt that this group was more immature and needed additional guidance.

An administrative interview was also conducted at site B in the first weeks of the 1995-96 school year to determine the presence of behavioral concerns.

When asked to characterize the most prevalent discipline problems in site B, the principal stated that minor infractions and classroom related issues constituted 2,350 of the 2,400 (or approximately 98 percent) detentions issued in the 1994-1995 school year. According to this administrator the behaviors teachers expressed the most concern over were students' inability to follow classroom rules, talking out of turn, interruptions, out of seat behavior and not completing assigned work.

When asked to compare the current group of middle school students under his administration to others he has worked with in the past, he said that they were similar in many ways. The climate of the current group is improving and may over time compare more favorably to groups he has worked with in the past.

At site C an interview was conducted with the assistant principal in charge of discipline. It was stated that student squabbles and arguments were the discipline issues that were dealt with most frequently. It was said that teachers seemed most concerned with students acting disrespectfully and

refusing to do schoolwork. The administrator noted that in recent years there have been an increase in physical aggression and students' disrespect toward others. No misbehaviors were identified that were currently on the decrease. The misbehaviors that this administrator most desired to eliminate were disrespect and lying.

Probable Causes

When analyzing the probable causes of increasing misbehavior in the classroom setting, it is important to note that in recent decades society has undergone major shifts in economics, traditions and values. These changes have had enormous impact on the families of today's schoolchildren. A high rate of divorce, coupled with a dramatic increase in out-of-wedlock births, has resulted in a large population of school-aged children who are being reared in single-parent homes today. In 1992 it was estimated that 60 percent of current five-year olds would live in single-parent families before reaching the age of 18. Research shows that children from single-parent families are more likely to be late, truant, and subject to disciplinary action (Eitzen, 1992). Obviously, the increase in this student population has had repercussions in the classroom. "It is no secret ... that many

students come to school more concerned for their basic security needs than for learning their times tables" (Curwin & Mendler, 1988, p.6).

Another major change in family structure is the increase in the number of families with two primary wage earners. Currently about 70 percent of mothers of school-aged children work outside the home, as do over 50 percent of mothers with children under the age of six. As a result, a large population of today's preschoolers are being cared for by adults who are not their parents, and millions of children between the age of five and thirteen have no adult supervision after school.

As "more and more children are being raised in families in which the parents have less and less time for them," (Eitzen, 1992, p.588) it is not surprising to find more children coming to school who have not internalized the traditional values that secure family units once passed on in the home. Stressed-out parents who have limited time for childrearing often compensate for their guilt with overindulgence in material goods, or with excessive permissiveness, failing to set firm and realistic limits for their needy children.

In the classroom today teachers are feeling the reper-

cussions of such family dynamics, as teachers find large numbers of children desperate for help in healthy emotional development. These children have adopted the attitude of "Meet my needs first. I do not intend to wait. I come first" (Curwin & Mendler, 1988, p.6).

The media has also contributed to the way children view and react to the world. Educators have found that the preponderance of violence in the media has contributed to an increase in anti-social behaviors in and out of the classroom. In a typical half-hour cartoon show, researchers noted at least fifty acts of violence. By the time a child reaches adolescence he or she will have viewed approximately 18,000 such violent acts in television programs (Curwin & Mendler, 1988).

According to Mark Walsh (1995), a study done by Levin and Carlsson-Paige found that children have difficulty differentiating between fantasy and reality and recognizing that actions have consequences. It was found that children who watch Power Rangers become more violent, often mimicking the martial arts moves featured on that day's episode. This kind of television programming and the easy availability of violent videos has contributed to an acceptance and glorification of violence in solving problems. This contributes to an

of violence in solving problems. This contributes to an increase in discipline problems in the classroom.

Albert Shanker (1995) feels that many schools suffer from violence and disruptive behavior, in part because teachers are teaching the wrong lessons when it comes to discipline. He points out that students who are not taught at an early age the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior and who are allowed to disrupt the class often are not handed consistent consequences. These students learn that disruption is not always met with a consequence and that misbehavior is acceptable from time to time. Although these lessons are taught inadvertently, they have lasting effects on the students.

Fredric Jones (1987) suggests one possible reason for such inadvertent lessons. He notes that teachers are not systematically taught discipline skills in preparation for their career, citing a marked absence of such course work in the catalogs of teacher-training programs. He states that "[T]he notion that teachers will somehow, magically, spontaneously learn how to keep thirty kids from going thirty different directions once the teachers are 'on the job' is amazing -- a cruel hoax used to cover up a major deficiency in teacher training" (p.10).

Kathleen Cotton (1990) identifies in-school disciplinary practices which contribute to an increase in inappropriate behavior within the classroom. These practices include the following: rules that are unclear and impossible to enforce, ignoring student misconduct, inconsistent responses to misbehavior, excessive or inappropriate punishment, corporal punishment, and out-of-school suspensions. "Many teachers create their own discipline problems. Just as we teach the way we were taught, we tend to discipline with the same ineffectual methods that were used on us" (Wasicsko & Ross, 1982).

In conclusion, all three sites found the following causes as the primary contributors to inappropriate behavior in the classroom:

1. less traditional values being transmitted by the family;
2. impact of media in modeling disrespectful and aggressive behavior;
3. overindulgence leading to lack of self-discipline; and
4. lack of teacher training in effective discipline techniques.

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Many classroom management problems are caused and sustained by teachers who inadvertently use self-defeating strategies to maintain control (Wasicsko & Ross, 1982). Much research has been done on the causes of inappropriate classroom behavior and possible solutions. The following are synopses of various researchers' attempts to find answers to these problems which disrupt learning. All of the strategies analyzed support the assertion that "discipline is not a punishment system designed to break a child's spirit and individuality. It is a teaching system that leads to orderliness and self control" (Wyckoff & Unell, 1991, p. 6).

In the 1930's the eminent psychologist B. F. Skinner studied the effectiveness of shaping behavior in animals and humans by providing positive stimuli *after* a desired act or behavior was performed. This strategy, called *positive rein-*

forcement, proved more powerful in shaping desired behaviors than providing punishment for undesirable behaviors. In the past three decades Skinner's work has been adapted by educators as a means of controlling and motivating student behavior. This approach, called *behavior modification*, achieved wide-spread acceptance by classroom teachers, and continues to be used widely in special education settings (Charles, 1985). In response to desired student behaviors, teachers use a variety of positive reinforcers, ranging from facial expressions and gestures to graphic reinforcers such as marks and stars, or tangible reinforcers such as food, prizes, or printed awards (Axelrod, 1977).

Contingency management, also known as "token economies," is an elaborate system of behavior modification involving tangible reinforcers. In this program, students are given tokens such as tickets, play money, or poker chips as rewards for desired behaviors such as raising hands, finishing work, or improving over past performance. Students accumulate tokens to "buy" various rewards such as toys, food, or special activities or privileges. Token economies are rather expensive in teacher preparation time as well as in money spent purchasing rewards and therefore have mainly been used for student groups with severe learning or behavior problems

(Axelrod, 1977).

In recent decades Lee and Marlene Canter's (1976) assertive discipline program has been widely implemented. The Canters distinguish three styles of teacher communication: non-assertive, hostile, and assertive. Effective teachers use the assertive style of communication, insisting on decent, responsible behavior by all students. The teacher uses a firm tone of voice, maintains eye contact, and uses non-verbal gestures in support of verbal statements to set limits. Canter and Canter (1976) believe that the teacher has the right to determine basic classroom rules. When making demands, teachers should follow through with reasonable consequences that have been previously established, rather than making threats when a student chooses to misbehave.

One of the basic techniques that the Canters advocate is that of the "broken-record." The "broken-record" occurs when the teacher refuses to be sidetracked by other issues and continues to reassert his/her original demand or request.

Incentives are part of the assertive discipline program. Such incentives include marbles in a jar, secret words, and grab bags. These incentives can be either whole group or

individual.

Harry Wong (1989) bases his system of behavior management on the Assertive Discipline plan but takes it a step further. He advocates placing the names of students who misbehave on the chalkboard, with checks added for further offenses. Children are then punished with a loss of privileges.

Many educators offer strategies for manipulating children's behavior through extrinsic rewards (Canter & Canter, 1976; Skinner, 1971). However, Alfie Kohn (1993) reminds us that we have to be concerned with the kind of people our children will become. By rewarding children with praise, privileges and goodies we are not helping them develop a commitment for responsibility. He states that anyone rewarded for an act of generosity will be less likely to think of himself as a caring person, but rather will attribute the behavior to the reward.

Kohn states that rewards punish, rupture relationships and ignore reasons. Rather, Kohn argues that we need to develop intrinsic evaluation. While Kohn maintains a need for setting and maintaining limits and structures, standards and goals, he feels these can best be met through collaboration,

content and choice. Some general guidelines to follow to help bring about responsible, positive behavior are:

- a warm, nurturing environment;
- teaching by example (modeling);
- explaining behaviors (reasoning);
- assuming the best in a child;
- offering opportunities to care;
- developing the ability to think with head and heart; and
- seeing another's viewpoint.

Jane Bluestein (1988) corroborates this thinking with her contention that obedience is externally motivated because of fear of pain, or deprivation, whereas responsible cooperation is internally motivated based on self knowledge and confidence.

Curwin and Mendler (1988) point out that the ultimate goal of any behavior program is to have students behave because they know they should, not because they fear punishment. In order to achieve this goal, teachers should model caring, responsible behavior by teaching students with kindness, respect and dignity. Curwin and Mendler's program

addresses prevention, action (what to do when misbehavior occurs), and resolution (what to do with out-of-control students).

To prevent behavior problems, teachers need to define rules and expectations clearly, as well as consequences for breaking those rules. Teachers must provide direct instruction in those rules and procedures, checking for mastery as they would in any academic subject area. When students do misbehave, teachers must respond consistently with a flexible range of consequences. Teachers need to respect student dignity and privacy as they intervene with redirection or consequences. Curwin and Mendler acknowledge that some student misbehavior is more serious or chronic and will require further intervention. Special contracts and plans may need to be developed mutually with the offending student. Such contracts should be creative, continually monitored, and open to revision as needed.

Rudolf Dreikurs (1974) states that discipline is not punishment; rather it is educating students to impose limits on themselves because all students want to belong and want recognition. He feels misbehavior is associated with four

mistaken goals: seeking attention, power, revenge, and the feeling of inadequacy. Teachers need to identify these mistaken goals and then act in a way that does not reinforce them. Discipline problems may be avoided if teachers involve students in the process of establishing classroom rules and procedures. Students should be made aware that inappropriate behavior results in unpleasant consequences. The focus of teacher encouragement should be on students' efforts, rather than on their work or character.

Oftentimes behavior problems stem from a breakdown in communication between teachers and students. Thomas Gordon (1974), founder of Teacher Effectiveness Training Associates, focuses on improving classroom communication skills by training teachers to reexamine the messages their adult language-sends and the messages their students may be sending to them in "code." For the teacher, this involves active listening and knowing when to use silence, "door openers," and acknowledgement responses to elicit genuine communication from the student. This helps bring about appropriate behavior in the classroom by creating an environment of openness, trust, and understanding. To avoid teachers unintentionally sending negative messages to students, Gordon urges them to use "I

messages, rather than commands or judgmental statements. Instead of saying, "Pick up that book you left on the floor," teachers should say, "When I see a book on the floor, I am afraid I will trip and fall." Students can receive this message and act on it without feeling judged. This leads to an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Schools across the nation note a dramatic rise in aggressive and inappropriate behavior in children. Many educators believe that the decline of the traditional family, increased feelings of selfishness, poor parenting, and lack of moral and ethical values being taught at home all point to the need for character education programs in today's schools.

A typical character education program includes the following six specific moral objectives:

1. knowing the ethical aspects of the situation as it occurs;
2. awareness of the "right thing to do";
3. ability to look at issues through a different perspective;
4. ability to reason;
5. ability to make choices and decisions; and
6. knowing what is right.

In order to develop a character education curriculum, the teacher needs to encourage respect for others; involve students in the decision-making process; teach values while creating a moral community; incorporate conflict resolution, cooperative learning and positive discipline; and have the teacher practice what she/he preaches (Lickona, 1993).

Suzanne Fields (1992) adds another dimension to character building. She suggests that teachers give all students jobs and responsibilities to develop respect for authority, patience, manners and discipline. Students need to learn the importance of being responsible and organized. She stresses the importance of the American work ethic (sic), because she feels that without it, students will never attain success.

Student misbehavior often involves fighting, arguing, or petty bickering. Conflict resolution training is a program that seeks to address this problem--not by urging students to avoid conflicts, but by teaching them how to handle them. A trained coordinator teaches students how to use negotiation, mediation, and arbitration to resolve their own conflicts (Johnson, Johnson, Dudley & Burnett, 1992).

(Johnson, Johnson, Dudley & Burnett, 1992).

> According to Kay Burke (1992, p. 76);
>
> Learning how to formulate and to defend one's beliefs rationally, intelligently, and calmly in a multi-ethnic society is an important life skill. Students need to be prepared to live in a society where opinions are as diverse as the population and where controversy exists in the classroom, community, nation and world. Being able to see different points of view, negotiate, and compromise are essential life skills.

Conflict resolution is but one component of a more comprehensive teaching approach known as cooperative learning (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1988). Cooperative learning encourages students to learn together while developing knowledge, talent, and skills that can be transferred into the adult world. Instead of students working on assignments independently, students are placed into groups to accomplish these tasks. Specific social skills are explicitly taught and then practiced in cooperative group tasks. As each cooperative learning activity concludes, students are encouraged to

reflect on their group's progress in mastering the targeted social skill, as well as the academic task. Proponents of cooperative learning point out that teachers who fail to properly teach these social skills may spend a good deal of time redirecting and intervening as students become disruptive, fall off task, or interrupt others during group work. "Teaching cooperative social skills to students will help them develop interpersonal skills, self-esteem and an internal locus of control" (Burke, 1992, p. 41).

There are cognitive benefits to students who participate in cooperative learning, as well. Students are required to use higher level thinking skills to get along in group work as well as individual curricular areas. Cooperative group work promotes students' internal motivations for learning and to get along with peers and teachers alike (Bellanca & Fogarty, 1991).

Fredric Jones (1987, p. 8) defines classroom discipline as "the business of enforcing classroom standards and building patterns of cooperation in order to maximize learning and minimize disruptions." He takes a humanistic and practical approach to classroom discipline, asserting that classroom

management procedures must be positive, set clear limits, and build cooperation in the absence of coercion. They must be gentle. In addition, they must be economical, simple and easy to use once mastered, so that they ultimately reduce the teacher's work load.

Jones points out that contrary to public perceptions, very few discipline problems involve major blow-ups, fights, or openly defiant behavior. Rather, the most important and costly type of discipline problem in classrooms is the *small disruption*, such as talking to neighbors, wandering out of seat, and calling out without raising hand. The two basic parts of his classroom management system, *limit-setting* and *responsibility training*, aim to minimize these disruptions while keeping a cheerful, respectful, positive classroom climate.

Limit setting involves those subtle teacher behaviors and interpersonal skills that convey to students that the teacher means business. Jones asserts that students "read" body language very skillfully, and he delineates a progression of slow, deliberate teacher moves that tend to correct student misbehavior with a minimum of verbiage, emotion, or

disruption. Teacher proximity alone has been shown to eliminate a large percentage of minor off-task behaviors without any verbal messages, and Jones advocates using the minimum intervention needed to get the student back on task. Sequentially, a teacher might try delivering a penetrating look, calmly saying the offending student's name, moving slowing toward the student's desk, touching the student's desk with knees, leaning on the student's desk with palms, or even elbows--invading the student's space *only as far as needed* to get the student back on task (Jones, 1979). Key is the teacher's self control, deliberate calmness, and lack of emotion when setting limits. This gentle but determined limit-setting procedure needs to be fairly intensive at the beginning of the school year, as students take stock of their new teacher, but it becomes almost self-eliminating as the year progresses.

In Jones' classroom management system, limit-setting aims to eliminate misbehavior. On the other hand, responsibility-training involves encouraging correct behavior and building patterns of cooperation. It is a *whole group* strategy where the students sink or swim together. It utilizes an

unusual positive behavioral incentive: *time*. The teacher offers the class a specific amount of Preferred Activity Time (PAT) on a daily or weekly basis depending on the age of the students. This PAT is a special time for enjoyable, teacher-led academic activities, such as games, projects, and related art activities. Students can add to this base PAT time by exhibiting good group behavior (working quietly, cleaning up quickly, and orderly behavior in the halls--whatever behavior the teacher chooses to target). Conversely, the group's allocated PAT time can be reduced by student misbehavior (time wasted by individuals or the whole class in disorderly transitions, time off-task during seat work when the teacher is meeting with a small group and the like). This wasted time can be accumulated on a stop watch during the day. Jones notes that often the teacher, by merely holding aloft the stop watch, can eliminate misbehavior without saying a word.

Immediately before the scheduled PAT, the teacher adds on the bonus minutes and subtracts the penalty time. Students and teacher then enjoy the designated "fun" and academically worthwhile PAT activity together, building a positive, warm relationship as they learn. Working together as a team to

maximize desired PAT, students learn to take responsibility for their own behavior while encouraging each other to behave and stay on task. Jones terms the combination of limit-setting and responsibility-training *positive discipline*, since it emphasizes encouraging positive behaviors and attitudes without negative the emotional impact of coercion, blame, and punishment.

Terminal Objective and Process Statements

As a result of a positive discipline program and an increased instructional emphasis on cooperative learning during the period of September, 1995 to January, 1996, the targeted third- and eighth-grade classrooms will show a decrease in identified disruptive behaviors and an increase in positive classroom interactions as measured by behavior checklists and teacher observations.

1. Implement positive classroom discipline program.
2. Select and teach social skills using cooperative learning.
3. Integrate cooperative learning into the curriculum area.

Action Plan

Process Statement One:

WHO: Four third-grade classrooms with 21-26 students and one eighth-grade class with 25 students, base group, 3-5 students in each group, heterogeneously grouped with groups changing monthly.

WHY: To establish a cooperative, responsible classroom with clear and consistent limits and consequences, to minimize disruptions and maximize learning.

WHEN: The positive classroom discipline begins on the first day of school and is ongoing.

WHAT: Establish Classroom Rules, Routines, and Procedures

- Determine classroom rules before school begins.
- Determine classroom routines and procedures before school begins.
- Explicitly teach and practice classroom rules the first few days of school year.
- Explicitly teach and practice classroom routines and procedures first two weeks of school.
- Evaluate knowledge and mastery of classroom rules, routines and procedures.

Establish Learning Environment

- Arrange classroom furniture conducive to cooperative learning.
- Arrange classroom furniture to facilitate mobility and proximity of teacher to students.
- Place teacher's desk at side or rear of classroom.
- Create a visually pleasing classroom.
- Organize materials and supplies so that they are easily accessible to students.

Setting Limits

·Develop an understanding of Fredric H. Jones' (1987) limit setting strategy.
·Use body language of "meaning business."
·Maintain composure and neutrality when confronting disruption.
·Respect student's dignity while intervening.
·Use proximity to redirect behavior.
·Thank student for redirected behavior.
·Consistently enforce classroom rules and routines in least intrusive method necessary.

Responsibility Training

·Implement Jones, (1987) responsibility training strategy
·Introduce concept of Preferred Activity Time (PAT) to students.
·PAT is a desirable learning activity structured by the teacher.
·PAT is a specified period of time given to students.
·Students have control over PAT by either adding minutes for desirable behavior or subtracting minutes for undesirable behavior.
·Students are encouraged to behave responsibly as a group to add to PAT time.

Process Statement Two:

WHO: Four third-grade classes with 21-26 students and one eighth-grade class with 25 students. Base groups, 3-5 students in each, heterogeneously grouped, with the groups changing monthly.

WHY: To improve interpersonal behavior and to give practice with social problem solving.

WHAT: Teach by direct instruction, with group interaction and

group processing for evaluation. (See appendix for sample lessons.)

Social Skills taught will be:

·Group-Forming Skills
·Listening Skills
·Team Building Skills
·Conflict-Resolution Strategies
·Group Problem Solving

WHEN: Once weekly, 20-40 minutes per week from September, 1995 to the end of January, 1996.

WHERE: Three self-contained classes in an elementary school, a third-grade class in an intermediate school and a social-studies class in a middle school

Process Statement Three:

WHO: Four third-grade classes with 21-25 students and one-eighth grade social studies class with 25 students. Task groups consisting of 2-5 students per group. Group size dependent on task. Groups are formed randomly, by students or by teachers. Duration is dependent on task.

WHY: To provide practice in use of previously taught social skills within the content area.

WHAT: At the eighth-grade level task groups will apply the learned skills in the context of social studies. In the third-grade classrooms the task groups will apply the skills in the areas of math, social studies, language arts or science. The techniques used to implement these skills are think/pair/share, jigsaw, graphic organizers, projects and test review.

WHEN: Task groups at the third-grade level will work minimum of two times per week together for 10-40 minutes, during the period of September, 1995 to January, 1996. Students at the eighth-grade level will meet a minimum of one time per week for 20-40 minutes during September, 1995 to January, 1996.

Chapter 4

HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF INTERVENTION

The terminal objective of the interventions addressed minimizing inappropriate student behaviors that interfered with classroom instruction. Administrative interviews, teacher observations, and student and teacher surveys indicated a need for interventions in this area at all three school sites. The terminal objective of this action-research project stated,

> As a result of a positive discipline program and an increased instructional emphasis on cooperative learning during the period of September 1995 to January, 1996, the targeted third- and eighth-grade classrooms will show a decrease in identified disruptive behaviors and an increase in positive classroom interactions as measured by behavior checklists and teacher observation.

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following strategic procedures were proposed:

1. Implement a positive classroom discipline program.
2. Select and teach social skills using cooperative learning.
3. Integrate cooperative learning into the curriculum area.

This project was designed for and carried out in the targeted third-grade self-contained classes and the targeted departmentalized eighth-grade social-studies class.

A key element in implementing a positive classroom dicipline program is careful planning. In the weeks prior to the opening of school, teachers met to develop a common list of classroom behavior rules. The teachers deliberately chose to limit the number of classroom rules to five, in order to maximize students' ability to focus on key expectations and master them. The rules were written in simple, clear language, and the expectations were stated positively, rather than listing prohibitions. This, too, was an intentional choice, aimed at focusing students on what they **should** do, rather than what they should **not** do. Large posters of these rules

were made and placed prominently within each classroom (Appendix E). Teachers also carefully planned daily routines and procedures that would enable their classrooms to run smoothly and efficiently, minimizing confusion, disruption or "down time." Teachers took time to clarify for themselves what they would expect from their students in the fall.

Another important component of establishing a positive discipline program involved carefully structuring the physical environment for learning. Before opening day, teachers spent a good deal of time arranging furniture, material storage areas, and bulletin boards, to accommodate the intervention procedures. Student desks were arranged in clusters to facilitate cooperative learning base groups, while making it easy for the teacher to circulate throughout the classroom. The teacher's desk was placed either at the side or back of the room to avoid creating a physical barrier between teacher and student. Locations of frequently used student materials were carefully chosen to facilitate ease of student access. Special attention was paid to creating a visually pleasing classroom for students to enter the first day of school. A

cheerful, well-ordered environment was in place at each site to make a positive first impression.

On the first day of school the five classroom rules were introduced, and the first night's written homework involved students reflecting on the purposes for these rules with their parents (Appendix F). In the following days each rule was taught and practiced in the same manner as academic subject-area content. Students were required to demonstrate cognitive mastery of these rules and basic classroom procedures by passing a quiz on this material (Appendix G).

Another key component to establishing a positive discipline program involves establishing an aura of calm, gentle teacher power from the first moment students step into the classroom. The teacher-researchers in this study attempted to consciously control the body language they presented to their students in the first weeks of school.

In accordance with Jones' limit-setting techniques, teachers attempted to remain calm and display a neutral demeanor when confronting student misbehavior. When students misbehaved, teachers were consistent in intervening to

enforce the classroom rules in a low-key but non-negotiable manner. First, teachers would attempt to use eye contact to redirect misbehavior. If that was not successful, the teacher would calmly call the student's name, making a clear request for the desired behavior. If the student continued to misbehave, the teacher would increase physical proximity without further comment, until the student was back on task.

Correct behavior was encouraged using responsibility training procedures. Preferred Activity Time (PAT) was introduced as a positive behavior incentive for group compliance with classroom rules and procedures. The targeted third-grade classrooms were allotted 15 minutes per day to participate in enjoyable teacher-led academic activities. The targeted eighth-grade class was given fifteen minutes per week. Students were able to add to PAT by working quietly, cleaning up quickly and so forth. On the other hand, PAT was reduced for behaviors that detracted from classroom instruction. A stopwatch was used to keep track of time wasted through misbehavior or not following directions promptly. At the end of the day (third grade) or week (eighth grade), the extra earned minutes were added and the stopwatch minutes sub-

tracted from the initial 15 PAT minutes, to determine the duration of the special PAT activity that day.

Another of the core components of the intervention involved improving students' social skills through cooperative group instruction. In the beginning of the school year, the targeted third- and eighth-grade classes were arranged in cooperative base groups with two to five students per group. Social skills were introduced and reinforced within these base groups in a series of direct lessons. Emphasis was placed on basic interaction skills such as making eye contact, forming groups quietly, sharing materials, using each other's names and following role assignments. The second targeted area of social-skill instruction was communication skills. These involved using quiet voices, taking turns and being good listeners. Finally, team building skills were addressed in the areas of disagreeing with the idea, not the person, and staying with a group and offering teammates encouragement. As the year progressed, these social skills were reinforced as students worked on content-area assignments in cooperative task groups on a regular basis (Appendix I).

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Behavioral checklists and anecdotal records were used to document students' misbehavior. Student surveys were administered to determine perceptions regarding changes in classroom behavior as compared to the previous year.

Information gathered on the behavior checklist supported Jones'(1987) contention that the vast majority of discipline problems were in the "small disruption" category, such as talking out of turn. Many of the categories on the checklist were seldom or never marked. Physical fighting was almost nonexistent, and insubordination, inappropriate language and behaviors leading to detentions or time outs were rare. Because so many of the classroom misbehaviors were minor in nature, the teacher/researchers involved in this study found it difficult to be consistent in categorizing and marking them. Fluctuations in checklist data from week to week seemed random and were not felt to accurately reflect the level of misbehavior in the targeted classrooms. Variables such as

teacher absence, classroom parties, change in routines, indoor recess and varying teacher vigilance in record keeping had major impact on the weekly tallies. At the end of most weeks, the teachers at all three sites found that the checklist tallies did not accurately reflect their students' behavior. For these reasons, the checklists were abandoned after the month of October (Appendix J).

On the other hand, all teachers found that anecdotal records were more accurate in reflecting daily classroom behavior. These records also prove to be useful in the following ways:

- providing a daily opportunity for teacher reflection on the effectiveness of the intervention;
- maintaining an on-going record of individual student misbehaviors;
- collecting daily impressions of classroom behavior as a whole, in order to explore patterns; and
- identifying various components of the intervention that seem to be working or not working well.

As teachers sat down at the end of each day to write brief entries in their anecdotal records, they found themselves reflecting on **how** their classrooms had run that day,

and **why**. When things went smoothly, it was natural to look for causes so the good behavior could be repeated or extended. When a day had gone poorly, or a particular student had continued a pattern of misbehavior, teachers tended to look for causes so the misbehavior could change or cease. All teachers noted that this "forced" reflection helped keep them focused on the intervention throughout the study and encouraged them to fine-tune their positive classroom management skills in an on-going manner.

Teachers also found these anecdotal records invaluable in collecting data on individual students with recurring behavior problems. In examining these records, it became apparent that in each classroom just a few students were responsible for the majority of the disturbances, while many students' names never appeared. This supports Curwin and Mendler's (1988) "80-15-5" model, where 80 percent of students rarely break rules, 15 percent break minor rules on a regular basis and 5 percent break rules chronically. Teachers found the information gathered in these records quite useful when it came time to prepare for conferences with the parents of students with chronic behavior problems. These records also

proved helpful in conferring with support services personnel who were involved with such students. Two teachers even studied the anecdotal records before rearranging the classroom seating chart each month.

The anecdotal record proved to be useful throughout the intervention as a place to note daily impressions of classroom behavior as a whole. Teachers would comment about noise level, attentiveness and varying amounts of on-task behavior in their classrooms. Sometimes teachers would note special occurrences in the classrooms that seem to be related to behavior levels on a particular day. As teachers reread their anecdotal records from time to time, certain patterns emerged. It became clear that even minor disruptions in routine increased levels of misbehavior. Examples of such disruptions included arrival of a book order, a class party, indoor recess, unscheduled conversations with another adult during class time and enrollment of a new classmate.

Another pattern observed by the elementary teachers in this study was the difference between their class's behavior in the morning versus the afternoon. All four teachers found that behavior was generally more quiet, on-task and coopera-

tive in the morning and that it frequently seemed to degenerate in the afternoons. Comments such as, "Great morning, but afternoon was the pits. Too noisy!" were fairly common. Discussion among the teacher/researchers about this phenomenon did not lead to consensus as to its cause (was it teacher fatigue or student weariness, or both, that led to lower levels of classroom behavior in the afternoon?), but it did suggest to teachers that different types of activities might best be scheduled during certain parts of the day to maximize student learning.

Another pattern that emerged when all five researchers studied their collected anecdotal records was that teachers tend to judge and categorize general classroom behavior based on noise level. The largest number of general behavior comments throughout the records concerned noise. All five teachers regularly used cooperative learning strategies that encouraged active verbal participation in small group activities and provided direct social skills lessons in the use of "six inch voices." Yet the anecdotal records showed that all teachers spent much time and energy monitoring and reducing noise levels. Again, this finding supports Fredric

Jones'(1987) contention that small disruptions (such as talking out of turn or getting out of seat) are the vast majority of misbehaviors in the classroom, rather than fighting, swearing or acting disrespectful toward teachers.

The anecdotal records also helped to identify components of the intervention procedures that seemed to be working or not working well, as the intervention proceed. As the researchers compared notes from time to time, they often found their colleagues had similar successes or problems. For instance, all teachers noted the effectiveness of the stopwatch in the responsibility training portion of the intervention. All teachers reported that merely holding up the stopwatch brought an instant reaction from the class. Most students would immediately become quiet, while a few were busy "shhhhing" or calling out "Be quiet!"

An important component of the intervention involved training students in cooperative social skills. The anecdotal records reflected progress and problems in helping students learn to behave cooperatively. Social skill lessons in cooperative groups seemed to have mixed results. While all students could parrot back the expected replies, those with

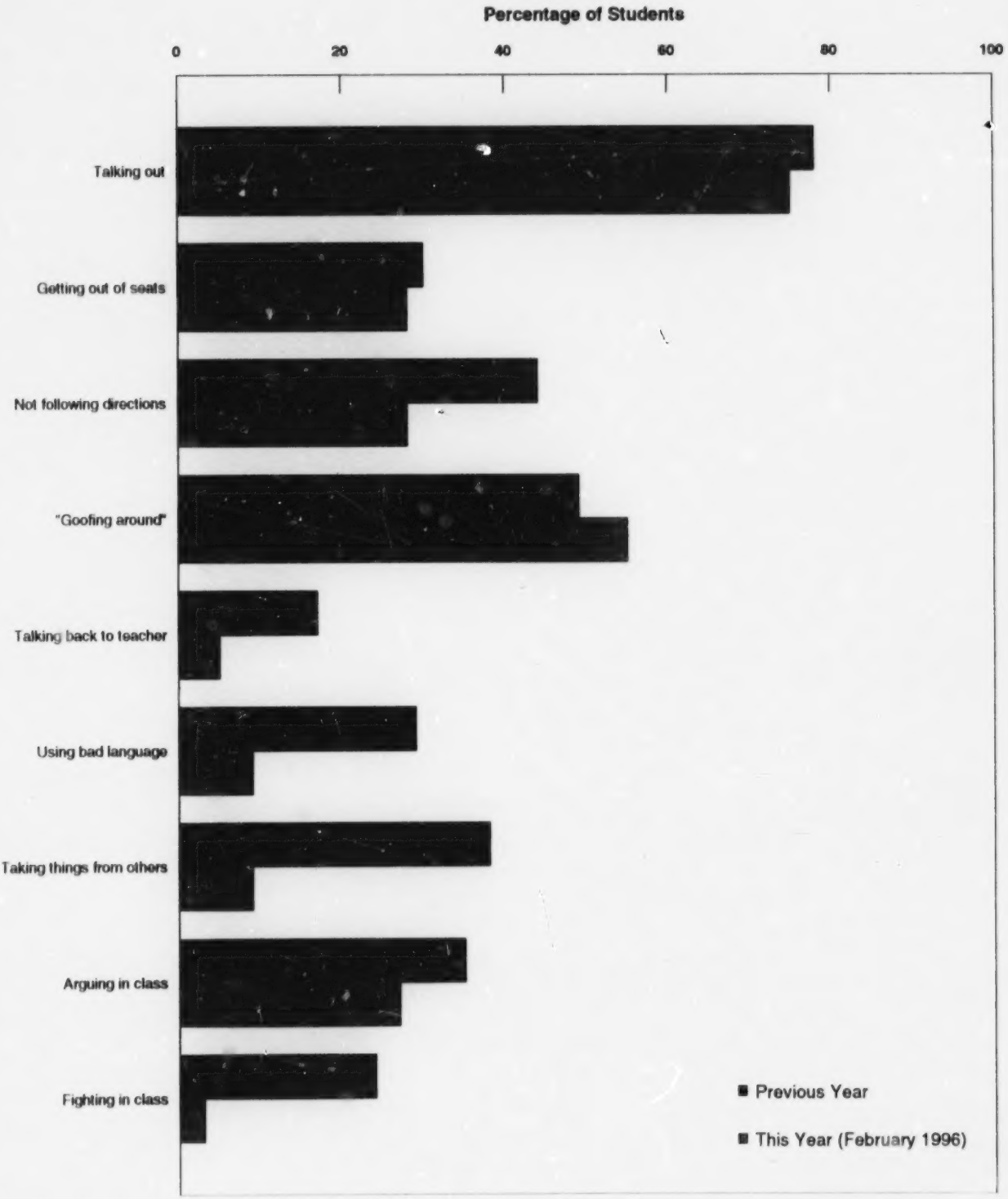
chronic behavior problems did not necessarily alter their behavior. When using cooperative groups in a content area, students seemed to be more on task and behavior problems declined.

Other comments in some teachers' anecdotal records noted problems coming up with motivating new PAT activities or finding time in the day for them. Once these problems were identified, the researchers as a team were able to brainstorm, coach and help each other find solutions. The anecdotal records were invaluable in highlighting emerging problems so they could be dealt with before they became larger.

The method used to collect evidence of behavioral change was consistent at each site. Students at the elementary sites (A and C) were given a post-intervention survey of 12 questions relating to their classroom behavior (Appendix K). At site B, students were given a post-intervention survey with eight questions (Appendix L). Students were asked to assess how frequently certain behaviors occurred in their classroom this year. Responses were again limited to the following: never, not very often, sometimes or many times. As with the previous survey, behavior was considered a "problem" if it

was said to occur sometimes or many times. The results of the post surveys were compared to the initial surveys to determine if the students' perceptions of their classroom behavior had changed.

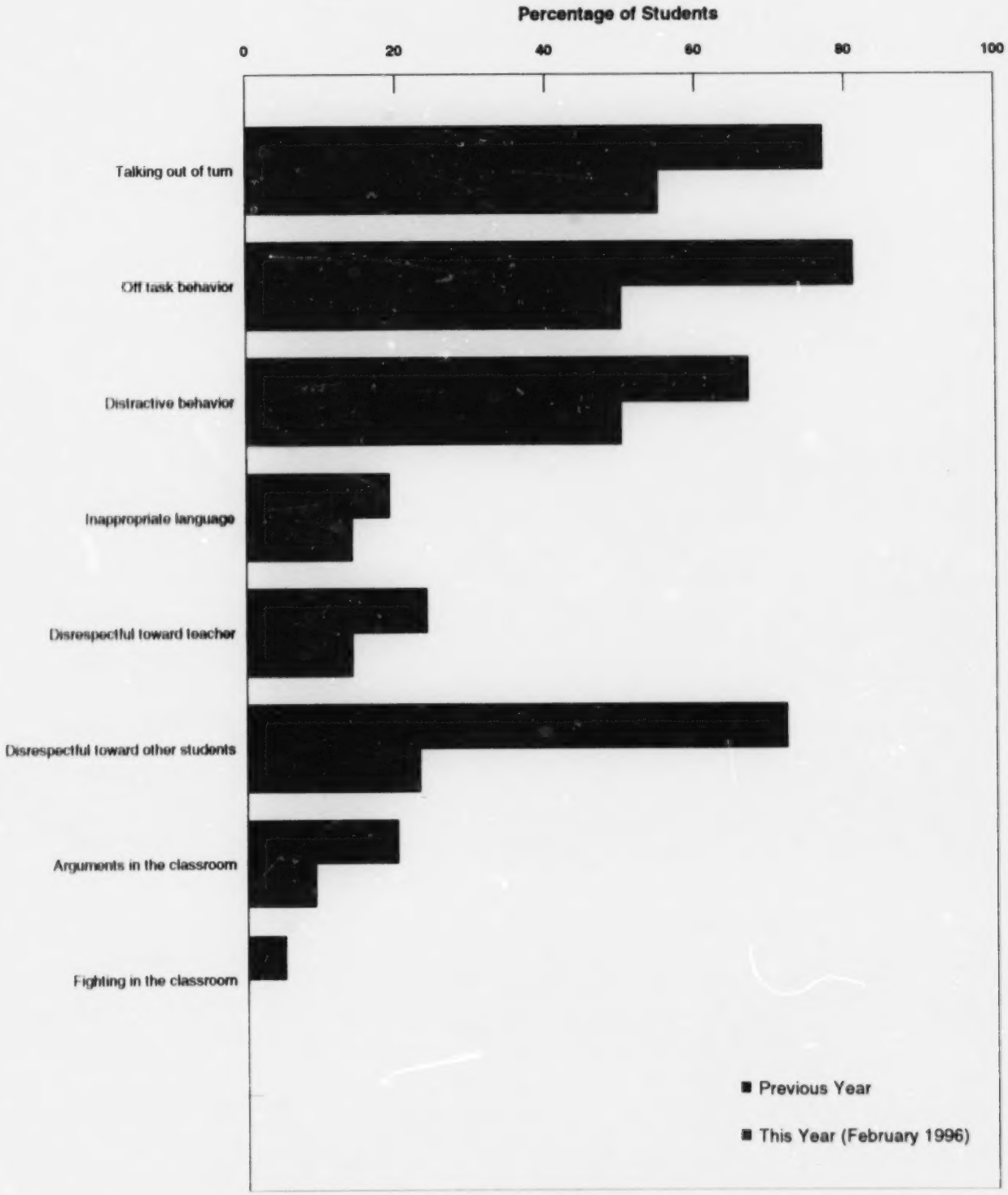
Behaviors Viewed as a Problem*
Site A



*A behavior was considered "viewed as a problem" if it was considered to happen "sometimes" or "often."

Table 4

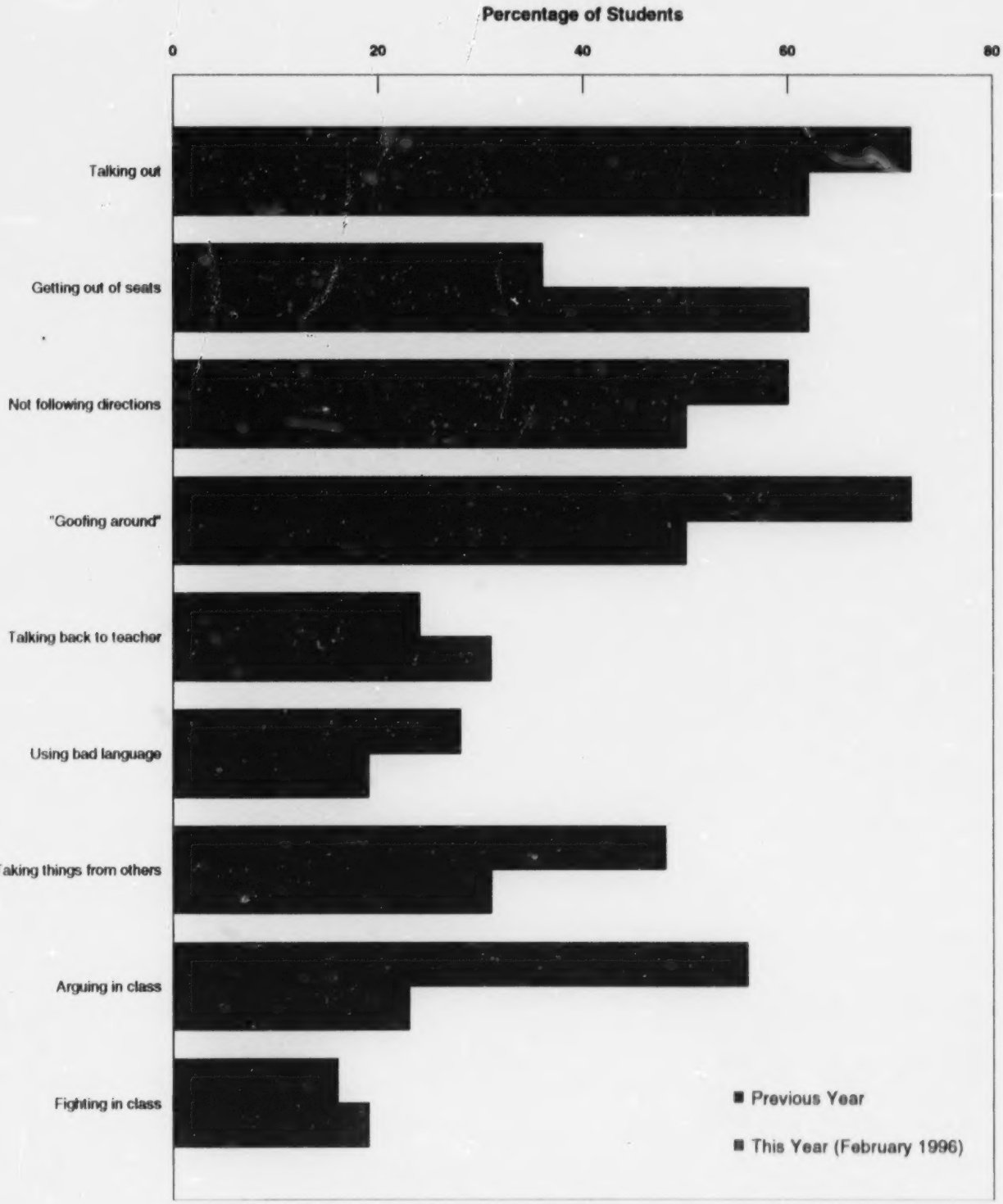
Behaviors Viewed as a Problem*
Site B



*A behavior was considered "viewed as a problem" if it was considered to happen "sometimes" or "often."

Table 5

Behaviors Viewed as a Problem*
Site C



*A behavior was considered "viewed as a problem" if it was considered to happen "sometimes" or "often."

Table 6

At site A there was a drop in perceived misbehaviors in every area except one, "goofing around." Only two misbehaviors were still perceived be a cause of concern to the children at this site. These behaviors were "talking out" and "goofing around."

At site B, the post-intervention survey also indicated there was a drop in student perceived misbehaviors. The largest decline occurred in "disrespectful behavior toward other students." A similar decline was seen in students' perceptions of "off-task" behavior. Although "talking out of turn," "distractive behavior," and "off-task" behavior declined, they still constituted the majority of perceived misbehaviors at that site. It was also noted that fighting in the classroom had declined to zero.

At site C there was a decline in six of the nine areas surveyed. Significant decreases were seen in "goofing around" and "arguing in class." Increases occurred in the areas of "getting out of seat," "talking back to teacher," and "fighting in class." Four misbehaviors were still perceived by the children to be a cause of concern. They were "talking

out," "getting out of seat," "not following directions," and "goofing around."

Since incorporating the positive classroom management program into the targeted classrooms, the teachers have received affirmative feedback from administrators, parents and students. At site A, the principal frequently stated she was extremely pleased with the conduct of this year's third-grade class and related that parents were also pleased. During the November conference sessions, teachers received many remarks from parents regarding satisfaction with what appeared to be fewer distractions in the classroom. Parents said children were more aware of classroom expectations and seemed comfortable in the classroom. Some third-grade students commented they were happier this year because their class was quieter and people worked better.

At site B, a parent commented to the teacher that the child finds fewer opportunities to be off task in the targeted classroom. This parent felt that learning was enhanced by the calm, consistent discipline system implemented in this middle school classroom.

At site C, administrators have commented to parents on the warm climate and the consistent and appropriate behavioral expectations in the targeted classroom. Furthermore, it was reported that the management program created an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. The administrators also noted that the use of proximity promoted on-task behavior.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of results there was a reduction seen in the majority of the identified areas of misbehaviors. The positive classroom management techniques coupled with cooperative learning and social skill reinforcement seemed to decrease classroom misbehaviors, thus allowing time for more classroom instruction. While the reduction of misbehaviors was observed, they were not eliminated.

The teachers at all of the sites concluded that the majority of misbehaviors were of a minor nature. These minor infractions were caused by roughly five percent of those in each class. These infractions can be minimized by limit set-

ting techniques. Non-verbal strategies were found to be dignified and often more effective than verbal reprimands.

Upon reflection the teacher/researchers involved in this study recommend that teachers:

1. familiarize themselves with Fredric Jones' philosophy of positive classroom management,
2. prepare classroom rules and expectations in advance of students' first day,
3. formulate short and directive rules,
4. provide direct instruction of rules,
5. be consistent with behavioral expectations,
6. prepare PAT activities in advance,
7. choose PAT activities that are educational as well as fun,
8. build flexibility into PAT time,
9. introduce and practice social skills in content based cooperative lessons,
10. establish seating arrangements conducive to limit setting.

Those considering further research in the area of positive classroom management may want to consider the following:

1. tracking and charting daily PAT gains and losses of time,

2. administering a pre- and post-intervention survey of parents' perceptions of classroom behavior,

3. having a third person administer pre- and post-intervention surveys.

This action research project has made its teacher participants more reflective of their past practices. They have increased their awareness of various classroom management programs enabling them to pick and choose the best elements from each program.

REFERENCES CITED

Axelrod, S. (1977). Behavior modification for the classroom teacher. New York: McGraw Hill.

Bellanca, J., & Fogarty, R., (1991). Building a caring, cooperative classroom: A social skills primer. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight.

Bennett, B. & Rolheiser-Bennett, C. (1992). A restructuring journey. In A. Costa, J. Bellanca, & R. Fogerty (Eds.) If minds matter: Volume 1 (pp. 103-123). Palatine, Il: Skylight.

Bluestein, J. (1988). 21st century discipline: teaching students responsibility and self-control. Jefferson City, MO: Scholastic.

Burke, K. (1992). What to do with the kid who . . .developing cooperation, self-discipline, and responsibility in the classroom. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight.

Canter, L., & Canter, M. (1976). Assertive discipline. Santa Monica, CA: Canter & Associates.

Charles, C.M. (1985). Building classroom discipline: from models to practice. White Plaines, NY: Longman, Inc.

Cotton, K. (1990). Schoolwide and classroom discipline. (School improvement research series. No. 9). Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. Portland, Or.

Curwin, R., & Mendler, A. (1988) Discipline with dignity. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development.

Dreikurs, R. (1974). Discipline without tears. New York: Penguin.

Eitzen, D.S. (1992). Problem students: sociocultural roots. Kappan, 73, 585-590.

Fields, S. (1992). Let's bring back lessons in character. Insight, p. 18.

Gordon, T. (1974). Teacher effectiveness training. New York: Peter H. Wyden.

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., Dudley, B., & Burnett, R. (1992). Teaching students to be peer mediators. Education Leadership,50, 10-13.

Johnson, D.W., Johnson, R.T., & Holubec, E.J.. (1988). Cooperation in the classroom. Edina, MN: Interaction.

Jones, F. (1979). The gentle art of classroom discipline. National Elementary Principal. 58, 26-32.

Jones, F. (1987). Positive classroom discipline. New York: McGraw Hill.

Jones, V.F. & Jones, L.S. (1986). Comprehensive classroom management: Creating positive learning environments. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Kohn, A. (1993). Punished by reward: the trouble with gold stars, incentive plans, A's, praise, and other bribes. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Lickona, T. (1993). The return of character education. Education Leadership., 51, 3, 6-11.

Louisiana gets tough on discipline. (1994-1995). American Teacher, 79, 20.

School Report Card. (1994). Deerpath junior high school. Lake Forest, Il.: School district 67.

School Report Card. (1994) Winkelman elementary school. Glenview, Il.: School district 31.

School Report Card. (1994) Woodland intermediate school. Gages Lake, Il.: School district 50.

Shanker, A. (1995). Classroom held hostage. American Educator, 19, 8-13.

Skinner, B.F. (1971). Beyond freedom and dignity. New York: Knopf.

Thomson, S.D., (1990). Forward. In O.C. Moles (Ed.). Student discipline strategies pp. IX-X). New York State University of New York Press.

Walsh, M. (1995) A bad influence. Teacher Magazine, August, 16-17.

Wasicsko, M. & Ross, S. (1982). How to create discipline problems. The Clearing House, 67, 248-251.

Wong, H. (1984). How you can become a super successful teacher. (Audio Tape) Sunnyvale, CA: Harry Wong Assoc.

Wyckoff, J.L. & Unell, B.C. (1991) How to discipline your six to twelve year old ... without losing your mind. NY: Doubleday.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

In the past years, how often have the following things happened in your classes:

(CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

1. Students talk without raising their hands.

never not very often sometimes many times

2. Students get out of their seats without permission.

never not very often sometimes many times

3. Students don't follow teacher's directions.

never not very often sometimes many times

4. Students goof around instead of working.

never not very often sometimes many times

5. Classmates bother you so you can't get your work done.

never not very often sometimes many times

6. Students talk back to teacher in a rude way.

never not very often sometimes many times

7. Students use bad language in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

8. Students take things that do not belong to them.

never not very often sometimes many times

9. Students argue (fight with words) in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

10. Students fight in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS BELOW

11. What classroom misbehavior bothers you the most?

12. How would you describe a student who is well-behaved?

Appendix B

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

How often did the following behaviors occur in your classes last year?

1. Talking out of turn (not raising hand).

   never not very often sometimes many times

2. Off task behavior (not paying attention).

   never not very often sometimes many times

3. Distractive behavior (talking while teacher is talking, passing notes, noises, etc.)

   never not very often sometimes many times

4. Inappropriate language

   never not very often sometimes many times

5. Disrespectful behavior toward teacher

   never not very often sometimes many times

6. Disrespectful behavior toward other students

   never not very often sometimes many times

7. Arguments in the classroom

   never not very often sometimes many times

8. Fighting in the classroom

   never not very often sometimes many times

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. What inappropriate classroom behavior bothers you the most?

2. How would you describe a well behaved student?

Appendix C

TEACHER - CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

In the past years, how often have the following things happened in your classes:
(CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

1. Students talk without raising their hands.

never not very often sometimes many times

2. Students get out of their seats without permission.

never not very often sometimes many times

3. Students don't follow teacher's directions.

never not very often sometimes many times

4. Students goof around instead of working.

never not very often sometimes many times

5. Students need directions repeated.

never not very often sometimes many times

6. Students talk back to teacher in a rude way.

never not very often sometimes many times

7. Students use bad language in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

8. Students take things that do not belong to them.

never not very often sometimes many times

9. Students argue (fight with words) in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

10. Students fight in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS BELOW

11. What classroom misbehavior bothers you the most?

Appendix D

ADMINISTRATOR
QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What are the most prevalent discipline problems that you have been asked to address?

2. What behavior problems do teachers express the most concern about to you?

3. Which behaviors have you seen increasing over the past few years?

4. Which behaviors have you seen decreasing over the past few years?

5. If you could change any negative behavior in the schools, what would it be?

6. How would you compare this group of students with other groups you've dealt with?

Classroom Rules

1. Listen the first time directions are given.

2. Raise your hand to speak.

3. Stay in your seat.

4. Keep your hands to yourself.

5. Use respectful language.

Appendix F

Name_____

What are some things a person with good behavior might do at school? Write your answer.

August 23, 1995

Name _____

Homework: "Third Grade Code of Conduct"

To prepare for tomorrows's discussion, please read each rule carefully and answer each question in writing.

Rule One: LISTEN THE FIRST TIME DIRECTIONS ARE GIVEN

Why do you think this rule is important?

Rule Two: RAISE YOUR HAND TO SPEAK

What would happen if this rule did not exist?

Rule Three: STAY IN YOUR SEAT

Why do you think we have this rule?

Rule Four: KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF

What do you think this rule means?

Rule Five: USE RESPECTFUL LANGUAGE

What is another way of saying this rule?

Appendix G

Name_____ Date_____

BEHAVIOR QUIZ

Directions: Answer each question with **YES** or **NO**.

_____1. If you are writing your name on your paper you do not need to listen to directions.

_____2. If you know an answer, shout it out.

_____3. Walk down the halls quietly.

_____4. If your neighbor has an extra pencil you may take it.

_____5. If your friend says you are stupid you may kick her.

_____6. We should always speak nicely to one another.

_____7. You may get out of your seat whenever you feel like it.

_____8. If the teacher is talking and you are thirsty, you may get a drink.

_____9. It is important to listen to directions the first time they are given.

_____10. When lining up for specials, line up quickly and quietly, without pushing others.

_____11. You may leave the room without permission if you have something you want to get out of your locker during the day.

_____12. It is okay to get out of your seat to tattle if someone else is breaking a rule or bothering you.

Think carefully about what you should do in each situation below. Answer in sentences.

13. During silent reading time your neighbor starts talking to you. **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?**

_____

_____

_____

14. While doing math, your pencil breaks. **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?**

_____

_____

_____

15. You are playing a game in class and a person plays out of turn. **WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?**

_____

_____

_____

✓= Each Occurrence

Appendix H

BEHAVIOR CHECKLIST WEEK OF:_____

NAMES OF STUDENTS	TALKING OUT OF TURN	PHYSICAL FIGHTING	ARGUING	INSUBORDINATION	INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE	TIME OUTS/ DETENTIONS	PARENT CONTACT (POOR BEHAVIOR)	OTHER (WITH COMMENT)	COMMENTS

Appendix I

Cooperative Learning - Lesson Plans

3rd Grade - Social Skills Lesson - Listening Activity

Objective: The students will learn to become active listeners.

Description: Ask students to think of a recent time when someone paid close attention to them. Ask how they knew they were being listened to. Make "T - Chart" using student input.

Sounds Like	Looks Like
"Uh-huh"	Eyes alert-focused on talker
"I see"	Mirroring emotions
Clarifying questions	Leaning forward towards speaker

Identify oldest student in each pair. Those students become "A's". Younger ones are "B's". Invite A's to listen to first instructions. Each A is to think of a time in the past year, when someone did not listen to them. What happened? How did it feel? A's should prepare story while B's go outside the room with teacher. Review "T-chart" with B's. Tell them NOT to listen. They may sing, talk, turn away, anything not to listen to their partner's story. Model "not-listening" behaviors. There are three rules: stay in room, don't hurt each other, and stop when teacher gives signal.
Move around room and note student behavior. Note student misbehaviors. After 45 seconds, have "B's" shake "A's" hands and apologize. Repeat and switch roles.

3rd Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson: Show the Decimal - Math

Objective: The students will learn about decimals. The students will also review taking turns and encouraging.

After demonstrating a lesson on decimals using base 10 blocks, pair up students. Assign roles of material manager and recorder. The materials manager will need to gather a set of base 10 blocks, slate, chalk, sock (eraser), and worksheet.

Explain that each partner will take turns representing a decimal with base 10 blocks. The other partner must write on the slate the fraction and the decimal represented. The partner that made the decimal will check the slate for the correct answers. If the answers are incorrect, they will help their partner figure the correct answer. After each partner has had at least five turns to do both jobs, they will fill out and then hand in, one worksheet.

Before groups are formed, ask the class how they can take turns with a friend and why it is important. Then talk about how we help or encourage a friend when they do not understand something. Explain that you will be looking for those same behaviors while they are working in their groups.

3rd Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Language Arts

Objective: The students will complete a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* and *The Talking Eggs*. The student's will have experience in reaching consensus.

Description: After reading and discussing both books, split the class in threes. Assign each group member two roles: explainer, materials manager, researcher, cutter, gluer and recorder. The materials manager needs to gather the following items: scissors, glue, pencils, markers, large piece of construction paper, and sheet of descriptors.

Explain that when they work in their groups, they will have to reach group consensus of where they place the descriptors. Discuss with the class different ways that consensus can be reached. Make a list on the board.

When the groups are together, their job is to make a Venn Diagram of the two stories placing the descriptors in the correct location. After they have completed the task, they are to make up six different descriptors and place them correctly.

After completion of the Venn Diagram, students should sign diagram if they agree consensus was reached in the placement of the descriptors.

3rd Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Social Studies

Objective: The students will construct a timeline of Thomas Edison's life. The students will review using a 6" voices.

Description: The students have completed a Thomas Edison biography. They have also been learning about timelines. The students will demonstrate their knowledge of Thomas Edison's life by preparing a timeline.

The children will work in groups of three or fours using one set of materials. Each child is responsible for explaining how they have placed their dates and events. Children will be reminded what 6" voices sound like, and be asked to demonstrate them in this lesson.

Each group will use a web and write as many items they can think of that might be on a timeline. This will serve as a review of timelines.

A group of dates and a group of events are placed in an envelope. Each date or event is on a separate card. Each group of students is asked to match the date with the event and to arrange them in a proper order on a blank timeline

While students are working, teacher will note which groups are working well using their 6" voices.

Upon completion of the task, a discussion will be held regarding the different strategies that were used to help them complete the task.

3rd Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Math

Objective: The students will review a geometry unit using a People Search. The students will practice working on appropriate movement skills within the classroom.

Description: Teacher will discuss and record with the class appropriate ways of moving within the classroom. A "T-Chart" of acceptable and unacceptable movements will be constructed with the students.

The rules of the People Search will be: no child may answer more than two questions on the same sheet. Each child will receive a copy of the People Search. Some examples of questions on the search are: Tell how a cylinder and a prism are alike, demonstrate an angle less then a right angle, draw a polygon.

The students will be given approximately fifteen minutes to complete the task. The search is completed when the first person has their answer sheet filled. At this time, the entire class reviews the answers.

During the search, the teacher will note movements within the classroom. Afterwards, a discussion will be held regarding appropriate and inappropriate movements observed.

3rd Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Science

Objective: Students will be able to determine the temperature at which condensation forms. Students will also practice working in a group.

Description: Student were placed in groups of 3 with the following roles assigned: materials manager, recorder and reader. One set of materials was used for each group.

Groups recorded the room temperature on the data sheet. Water was put in a can and water temperature was also recorded. Iced was then added to the water. When condensation formed on the can, temperature was again recorded.

Each group was responsible for stating their conclusions and answering three questions regarding the experiment on the data sheet. As teacher observed, individuals were questioned at random.

Students processed after data sheet was completed by answering the question: Our group worked together like the color _____ because_____.

8th Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Social Studies

Objective: The students will work in groups to create a flow chart which enables students illustrate how a bill becomes a law.

Description: Students will work in cooperative groups of three students. They will takes notes on reading material and then discuss the material in class. The notes will be checked by the teacher and be returned to the students so they can use the notes to develop their chart. The students will create a flow chart for each step in the law making process. Students will share materials and assume assigned roles. After the presentations are complete, students will be given a test on the material. Later, the information will also be on the final Constitution test in the form of an essay. Students may then wish to write their essay in the form of a flow chart.

8th Grade: Cooperative Content Lesson - Social Studies

Objective: The students will use a graphic organizer to organize information relating to the Civil War.

Description: Students will be divided into cooperative groups of 3-4 students each and given a list of advantages and disadvantages for both sides during the war. They would then determine which were important for the North and which were important for the South. The same thing would be done in determining the disadvantages. Groups would decide upon a graphic organizer to use (fish bone, flow chart or Venn diagram). Information would then be charted.

Next, groups would decide, in their opinion, which side had the two most important advantages in the war, and why. Cooperative groups would reach a consensus and report how these advantages affected the outcome of the war.

Students will process after the groups report by using a T-Chart listing their groups strengths and weaknesses. Groups will choose one weakness and set a goal to improve on it the next time they work together.

Appendix J

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

How often have the following things happened in your class this year:

(CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

1. Students talk without raising their hands.

never not very often sometimes many times

2. Students get out of their seats without permission.

never not very often sometimes many times

3. Students don't follow teacher's directions.

never not very often sometimes many times

4. Students goof around instead of working.

never not very often sometimes many times

5. Classmates bother you so you can't get your work done.

never not very often sometimes many times

6. Students talk back to teacher in a rude way.

never not very often sometimes many times

7. Students use bad language in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

8. Students take things that do not belong to them.

never not very often sometimes many times

9. Students argue (fight with words) in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

10. Students fight in class.

never not very often sometimes many times

WRITE YOUR ANSWERS BELOW

11. What classroom misbehavior bothers you the most this year?

12. How do you think P.A.T. time has helped your classroom behavior?

13. How would you compare your class's behavior this year to your class's behavior last year? Be specific.

Appendix K
CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

How would you compare your classes behavior this year to last year's class? Circle your choice to show how often have the following behaviors have occurred in your class this year?

1. Talking out of turn (not raising hand).

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

2. Off task behavior (not paying attention).

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

3. Distractive behavior (talking while teacher is talking, passing notes, noises, etc.)

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

4. Inappropriate language

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

5. Disrespectful behavior toward teacher

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

6. Disrespectful behavior toward other students

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

7. Arguments in the classroom

more often than last year	not very often	about the same as last year	less often than last year

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. What inappropriate classroom behavior bothers you the most this year?

2. How do you think the activity time on Friday has affected your classroom behavior?

3. How would you compare your behavior this year to your classes behavior last year? Be specific?